

Message Text

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TO AMEMBASSY BELGRADE

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 202783

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS:MASS, PFOR, YO, US

SUBJECT: U.S.-YUGOSLAV MILITARY RELATIONS

1. ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE MCAULIFFE, WITH CLEARANCE FROM STATE, HAS TODAY (AUGUST 13) SENT YUGOSLAV MILITARY ATTACHE VUCKOVIC A FOLLOW-UP LETTER TO HIS LETTER OF JUNE 5. NEW LETTER ENCLOSES LIST CONTAINING DOD'S ITEM-BY-ITEM, DETAILED COMMENTS CONCERNING AVAILABILITY OF MILITARY EQUIPMENT ON VUCKOVIC'S LIST FORWARDED ON MAY 25. (REGARDING GOY'S REQUEST FOR MAVERICK-TYPE GUIDED MISSILES, DOD'S RESPONSE IS THAT "THESE ITEMS ARE NOT AVAILABLE". DOD'S POSITION ON THIS HAD BEEN CONVEYED TO THE YUGOSLAVS DURING GENERAL LAWSON'S TALKS WITH THEM IN BELGRADE.)

2. FOLLOWING IS TEXT OF LETTER (DATED AUGUST 11) FROM
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ASD/ISA MCAULIFFE.

BEGIN QUOTE:

DEAR COLONEL VUCKOVIC:

I REFER TO YOUR LETTER OF 24 MAY 1976 BY WHICH YOU FORWARDED THE LIST OF EQUIPMENT OF INTEREST TO THE GOVERNMENT OF YUGOSLAVIA (GOY), AND TO MY INTERIM RESPONSE OF 5 JUNE 1976.

OUR SERVICES HAVE REVIEWED THE GOY LIST AND I NOW ENCLOSE OUR COMMENTS CONCERNING AVAILABILITY OF THE EQUIPMENT. AS YOU KNOW, GENERAL LAWSON OF THE AIR STAFF VISITED YUGOSLAVIA RECENTLY AT WHICH TIME HE AND HIS TEAM DISCUSSED WITH GOY OFFICIALS MANY OF THE ITEMS ON THIS LIST, AND PROVIDED INFORMATION WHICH INCLUDED AVAILABILITY FOR SALE AND COMMERCIAL SOURCES.

I UNDERSTAND THAT PERSONNEL FROM GENERAL LAWSON'S STAFF HAVE ALREADY BRIEFED YOUR ASSISTANT, LIEUTENANT COLONEL MIRKOVIC, ON THE RESULTS OF THE VISIT. THE AIR STAFF IS NOW INVOLVED IN CONSIDERABLE FOLLOW-ON ACTION, ATTEMPTING TO BE AS RESPONSIVE AS POSSIBLE TO YOUR GOVERNMENT'S NEEDS.

YOU WILL NOTE FROM THE ENCLOSURE, THAT THERE ARE SEVERAL ITEMS ON WHICH WE NEED MORE SPECIFIC DATA IN ORDER FOR US TO RESPOND TO YOUR QUERIES. I REFER SPECIFICALLY TO ITEMS 3, 10, 14, 15, 23, 35-37, 39, 43, 44, 49 AND 50. AS SOON AS WE RECEIVE CLARIFYING INFORMATION ON THESE ITEMS WE CAN FURTHER ADDRESS YOUR REQUIREMENTS.

I URGE YOU TO WORK WITH OUR SERVICE REPRESENTATIVES WHEREVER POSSIBLE, TO DETERMINE WHAT, SPECIFICALLY, IT IS THAT YOUR GOVERNMENT REQUIRES, AND WHAT ITEMS OF EQUIPMENT WE HAVE THAT MIGHT BE AVAILABLE TO FILL THOSE NEEDS.

I NOTE THAT WE HAVE PREVIOUSLY RESPONDED TO YUGOSLAV MILITARY OFFICIALS CONCERNING SEVERAL ITEMS ON YOUR RECENT LIST. IN MANY INSTANCES, WE MADE THESE ITEMS AVAILABLE FOR YUGOSLAV PURCHASE, OFTEN NOTING COMMERCIAL SOURCES OF SUPPLY. IT IS DIFFICULT TO MEASURE PROGRESS MADE IN OUR EFFORTS TO
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RESPOND TO GOY QUERIES WHEN SUCH ITEMS APPEAR AGAIN ON YOUR LIST, WITH NO RECOGNITION OF THE PREVIOUS TRANSACTIONS. IN THIS RESPECT, I BELIEVE THAT MEMBERS OF MY STAFF HAVE MENTIONED TO YOU THAT A MORE EFFECTIVE MEANS OF PURSUING YOUR REQUIREMENTS WOULD BE FOR US TO WORK ON INDIVIDUAL REQUESTS FOR SPECIFIC ITEMS, RATHER THAN TO WORK WITH EXTENSIVE LISTS. I SUGGEST THAT YOU CONSIDER THIS MATTER CAREFULLY AS A METHOD OF ENHANCING OUR WORK. I BELIEVE

ALSO THAT THERE IS A NEED FOR CLOSER COMMUNICATIONS BETWEEN OUR GOVERNMENTS TO AVOID ANY MISUNDERSTANDINGS CONCERNING GOY REQUIREMENTS AND OUR RESPONSIVENESS THERETO. TO THIS END, WE SHOULD USE AVAILABLE CHANNELS, THIS IS, YOUR EMBASSY AND ATTACHE OFFICE HERE AND OUR EMBASSY AND ATTACHE OFFICE IN BELGRADE TO ANSWER QUESTIONS, SEEK TIMELY INFORMATION AND RESOLVE ISSUES AND PROBLEMS. FINALLY, I RECOMMEND SERIOUS FOLLOW-UP ON THE SUGGESTION MADE DURING GENERAL LAWSON'S VISIT THAT VISITS TO THE U.S.

BY YUGOSLAV EXPERTS AND TECHNICIANS, WHETHER TO MILITARY AGENCIES IN PURSUIT OF FOREIGN MILITARY SALES (FMS) OR TO COMMERCIAL COMPANIES, WOULD BE AN EFFECTIVE METHOD OF CLARIFYING AND DEFINING ISSUES. MY STAFF AND OTHER DEFENSE DEPARTMENT PERSONNEL ARE READY TO ASSIST IN ANY WAY YOU THINK WE COULD BE HELPFUL IN FURTHERING OUR MUTUAL FRIENDSHIP AND INTERESTS. END QUOTE

3. THE DOD REPRESENTATIVES WHO DELIVERED THE LETTER ON AUGUST 13 TO YUGOSLAV EMBASSY ASSISTANT ATTACHE MIRKOVIC (IN ABSENCE OF VUCKOVIC) EXPLAINED THAT SOME ITEMS ARE NOT AVAILABLE BECAUSE THEY ARE STILL IN RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT AND DO NOT YET HAVE THE FINAL GO-AHEAD FOR PRODUCTION. THEY ALSO STRESSED THAT DOD'S REQUEST FOR FURTHER CLARIFICATION ON SOME ITEMS WAS NECESSARY TO FACILITATE EXPEDITIOUS DOD HANDLING OF THE YUGOSLAV REQUESTS. MEETING BETWEEN DOD REPRESENTATIVES AND MIRKOVIC WAS FRIENDLY AND RELAXED. MIRKOVIC INDICATED DISAPPOINTMENT THAT MAVERICK WAS NOT AVAILABLE TO YUGOSLAVIA SINCE HE KNEW IT WAS BEING SOLD TO OTHER COUNTRIES. HE ALSO CONVEYED A SENSE OF FRUSTRATION THAT THE U.S. DOESN'T SEEM TO SUPPORT YUGOSLAVIA'S ATTEMPTS TO ACQUIRE "SOPHISTICATED" EQUIPMENT. HE WAS VERY RECEPTIVE TO THE NOTION THAT MORE EXCHANGES AND CONVERSATIONS BETWEEN

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U.S. AND YUGOSLAV "EXPERTS" WOULD BE USEFUL IN DEFINING NEEDS AND RESOLVING MISUNDERSTANDINGS.

4. WE ARE POUCHING FOR THE AMBASSADOR A COPY OF THE LETTER TOGETHER WITH DETAILED ENCLOSURE AND ALSO A COPY OF THE EXCELLENT REPORT OF GENERAL LAWSON'S TRIP. ROBINSON

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